Consumer Protection Act, 1986

*191. SHRI RAM NAIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have constituted a high power Working Group to examine the suggestions for making the Consumer Protection Act. 1986 more effective and purposeful;

(b) if so, the date of constistution and the composition of the Group;

(c) the terms of reference of the Group; and

(d) the time-bound programme to obtain, examine and implement the recommendations of the Group by the Governmnet?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) to (c). The Central Government has constituted a high power Working Group under the aegis of Central Consumer Protection Council on 7.1.1991 to suggest suitable amendments to make Consumer Protection Act, 1986 and MRTP Act, 1969 more effective and purposeful. The Working Group has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Minister incharge of Food and Civil Supplies, Government of West Bengal. Other members are Minister incharge of Food and Civil Supplies, Government of Tamil Nadu or his representative two Members of Parliament, representatives of Central Government trade and industry and consumer organisations. Initially the Working Group was to submit its report within four months. However, its term was extended twice by four months each. The present tenure of the Working Group will expire on 7.1.1992.

(d) So far, the Working Group has held three meetings. The final meeting of the Working Group will be held on 6.12.1991 when the report is expected to be finalised. Thereafter its recommendations will be discussed in the meeting of the Central Consumer Protection Council which will make suitable recommendations to the Central Government for amending the Consumer Protection Act, 1986.

National Commission on Rural Labour

*192 SHRI BHUBANESHWAR PRASAD MEHTA:
SHRI CHITTA BASU:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission on Rural Labour chaired by Dr.C.H. Hanumanth Rao has since submitted its report to the Government;

(b) if so, the salient features of the recommendations made; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL ('SHRI P.A. SANGMA): (a) to (c). The National Commission on Rural Labour (NCRL) has submitted its report on 31st July, 1991. Broadly, the NCRL has highlighted the need for achievement of two major goals for the rural labour namely improvement in their levels of living and ensuring their effective participation in the developmental process. To achieve this, the NCRL has emphasised further strengthening and improvement, *inter-alia* of land base; agricultural growth, employment guarantee programme, Infrastructure for rural industries, human resource development and provision of basic needs, social security, organisation aspects of rural labour and effective participation of rural labour in the

decision-making process through democratic decentralisation.

2. Some of the major recommendations of the NCRL are as follows:

i) Free and compulsory education for all children upto the age of 14.

ii) Prohibition of child labour in all occupations and processes.

iii) A "National Credit Fund for Women" for poor women so that they could get credit without any collateral security upto a specified financial limit.

iv) Fixation of a National basic minimum wage of Rs.20/- per day at December, 1990 prices and a provision for increase of wages automatically every six months on the basis of rise in the Consumer Price Index (CPI)

v) Self-employment programme like the IRDP by linking them to area development plans to be formulated by the elected institutions within the scheme of democratic decentralization.

vi) Ban on labour-displacing mechanization in agriculture, like the use of Combine Harvesters

vii) A more concerted policy to assist and provide relief to the migrant labour.

viii) Credit for consumption to rural labour families at lower rate of interest.

ix) Easier accessibility of institutional credit to rural labour households through Cooperative Banks

LEGISLATIVE MEASURES:

x) Right to work as a Fundamental Right with certain qualifications and an employment Guarantee Act to implement this.

xi A comprehensive Central legislation for agricultural labour providing for their protection and welfare.

xii) A National Commission for Bonded Labour functioning as a quasi-judicial Authority to oversee and monitor the implementation of the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976.

xiii) A model legislation for protection of home-based workers and their welfare.

xiv) Land Tribunals at the local level for speedy disposal of land reforms cases.

INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR IMPLEMENTATION

xv) Active involvement of the Panchayati Rajinstitutions in the implementation of

various recommendations of the NCRL.

xvi) A separate Department of Rural Labour at the Centre and in the States with an independent directorate of Rural Labour In the States to deal with all aspects of Rural Labour.

3. As of now, the recommendations relating to a Central legislation for Agricultural Workers; Central Legislation for Construction Workers and about the steps needed for bonded labour are under active consideration, State Government have also been addressed to consider implementing the recommendation regarding a minimum wage of Rs. 20/- applicable on a country-wide basis.

4. Other Ministries/Departments concerned with specific recommendations have been requested to indicate their comments by 31st December, 1991.

Setting up of Industries in tribal areas of Bihar

*193. SHRI KARIYA MUNDA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any industrial licences have been issued for the setting up of industries in the tribal areas of the country, especially Chhota Nagpur area of Bihar, during the last two years; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): (a) Statistics about Industrial Licences in respect of tribal areas are not maintained centrally in the Ministry of Industry, However, under the provisions of the Industries (Development & Regulation) Act, 1951, the following number of Industrial Licences have been granted for centrally declared backward districts in the country including Chhota Nagpur area of Bihar during the last two years:-

Year	*Industrial Licences granted for backward areas of the country*
1989	175
1990	167

(b) Details such as name and address of the undertaking, location, item(s) of manufacture and capacity in respect of all Industrial Licences granted are published regularly by the Indian Investment Centre in their 'Monthly Newsletter'. Copies of this publication are being sent to the Parliament Library regularly.

Revival of Sick Units in Small Scale Sector

*194. SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any new policy for sick units in the small scale sector is under consideration;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the State Governments would also be consulted in the matter; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (PROF. P.J. KURIEN): (a) to (d). There is an existing policy for preventing sickness and rehabilitation of potentially viable sick SSI units. Further improvements in the policy in view of the current industrial scenario are being formulated in consultation with concerned Minis-